

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-3 (Cancelled)

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A ~~The~~ recombinant DNA construct as claimed in claim 1, for expressing at least one heterologous protein in the plastids of higher plants, said construct comprising a chimeric 5' regulatory region which includes a promoter element, a leader sequence and a downstream box element operably linked to a coding region of said at least one heterologous protein, said chimeric 5' regulatory region enhancing translational efficiency of an mRNA molecule encoded by said DNA construct, relative to constructs lacking said chimeric regulatory region, said chimeric 5' regulatory region being PrnLT7g10+DB/Ec (SEQ ID NO: 14).

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A vector comprising the DNA construct as claimed in claim 4.

Claim 6 (Cancelled)

Claim 7 (Cancelled)

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in claim ~~[[1]]~~ 4, wherein said heterologous protein is expressed from a synthetic bar encoding nucleic acid, wherein said synthetic bar encoding nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 19 and SEQ ID NO: 20.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in claim ~~[[1]]~~ 4, said at least one heterologous protein comprising a fusion protein.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in

claim 9, said fusion protein encoded by a first and second coding region, said coding regions being operably linked to said chimeric 5' regulatory region such that production of said fusion protein is regulated by said chimeric 5' regulatory region, said first coding region encoding a selectable marker and said second coding region encoding a fluorescent molecule to facilitate visualization of transformed plant cells.

Claim 11 (Original): A vector comprising the DNA construct of claim 10.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in claim 9, said fusion protein being encoded by a polynucleotide consisting of an aadA coding region operably linked to a green fluorescent protein coding region.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The DNA construct as claimed in claim 12, said aadA coding region being operably linked to said green fluorescent protein coding region via a nucleic acid molecule encoding a peptide linker comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of ELVEGKLELVEGLKVA (SEQ ID NO:104) and ELAVEGKLEVA (SEQ ID NO:105).

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The DNA construct as claimed in claim 10, said construct comprising a sequence selected from the group of SEQ ID NOS: 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25, ~~and 27~~.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A plasmid for transforming the plastids of higher plants, said plasmid being selected from the group consisting of ~~pHK38(A), pMSK45, pMSK48,~~ pMSK49[[,]] and pMSK35.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): A transgenic plant containing

the plasmid as claimed in claim 15.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The transgenic plant as claimed in claim ~~[[15]]~~ 16, said plant being selected from the group consisting of monocots and dicots.

Claims 18-28 (Cancelled)